

# C.O.C.A. TIMES

COIN OPERATED COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 2  
ISSUE 1  
MARCH 2002

## AUTOMATIC STORED-ENERGY DROP-COIN MACHINES



Birdie



Fortuna



Regina Music & Gum



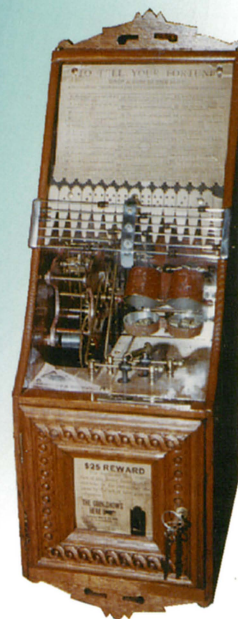
Mills Cathedral



Niagra Gum



Mills Lady Perfume



Clawson Dice



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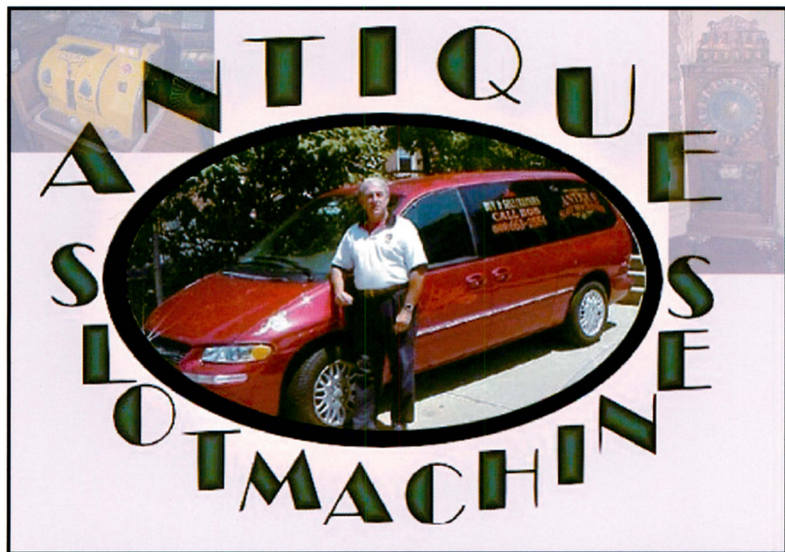
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## Message from Your President

I am very excited about the many responses I have gotten about the club. Many members have taken the time to tell me they are enjoying the C.O.C.A. Magazine and our club meetings. If you have any comments I'd like you to share them with me.

We have an exciting meeting planned for our April meeting and are already lining up some speakers for the fall. We are always looking for ideas so please share them with our meeting coordinator, Alex Warshaw. I am also looking for individuals who are willing to share a neat coin op experience so I can include it in a future article. Please contact me at Bedvibr8or@aol.com.

Our clothing line is certainly catching on as sales were great at our last meeting. For the first time C.O.C.A. will be in the main hall with a booth. We

will be answering questions, selling our clothing wear and signing up new members. Unfortunately because of the early article deadline, the space we are getting has yet to be determined.

I personally want to thank all those who have contributed to making C.O.C.A. bigger than ever. Our membership has doubled over the last 2 years and still growing. This club is in its infancy and has lots of great things to come. Be part of it! Until the next show, happy hunting and may you find the coin-op piece of your dreams.

Paul Hindin  
President, C.O.C.A.  
[www.coinopclub.org](http://www.coinopclub.org)



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Deadline for next issues ads & articles:

**June 1st, 2002**

## About the Cover

The cover story this issue comes to us from long time collector, author and historian Ken Rubin. His interests in the world of coin-op are vast, focusing on vending and penny arcade machines. His desire for the best of the best, and rarest of the rare are immediately evident should you have the good fortune of visiting his home.

Ken's book "Drop Coin Here" is still regarded as a must own reference guide for anyone possessed by coin-operated devices.

*Enjoy!*



# STORED-ENERGY AUTOMATIC DROP-COIN MACHINES

by: Ken Rubin  
Author of *Drop Coin Here*  
Email: dropcoinhere@aol.com

The arrival of coin-operated machines onto the public scene in the late 1870's created a new form of commerce in America. These new-fangled devices took root because they were delightful and charming novelties; their interactive nature produced pleasurable payoffs in the form of merchandise and entertainment, and captured the attention of the masses. Combined with the prosperity of the industrial revolution's economic boom, the coin-op machines thrived.

By the turn-of-the-20th century, these machines were solidly established as pleasing, practical laborsaving devices and 24/7 self-service providers, as well as amusing resources for entertainment and gambling. They gave the public its first exposure to chewing gum, peanuts, and even recorded music and movies. These pioneer "coin-in-the slot" machines also gave birth to early slot machines and spawned a new industry -- The Penny Arcade. As a result of their low operating overhead, mechanical machines could supply many small luxuries to an eager market for just a penny or a nickel. In turn, they rewarded their inventors, manufacturers, and operators with handsome profits. By World War II, more than 20,000 different machines were manufactured.

**"Push, Pull, or Turn, a lever, rod, or crank"** were common instructions posted on early coin-operated machines. They told the customer how to activate the apparatus after depositing his or her coin. Instructions were necessary because, to operate, the mechanisms required an input of power from the customer. The many dissimilar machine designs, from simple and harebrained contraptions to engineered machinery, all worked in a different way. That's not to say that *every* customer actually read (or could read) the instructions. Some people, especially men, fumbled impatiently with the mechanism using intuition or visual cues from the parts to make it function. For others, the machine was like a puzzle and "figuring it out" was more fun or seemingly easier than having to make sense of the directions. Conversely, inventors struggled to design mechanisms more rugged, reliable, slug and vandal proof, yet not too complex and demanding for the public — especially the ladies — to operate.

Sometimes the instructions were not even workable: the early run of the Mill's Orbit Jr. peanut venders state "Drop Coin Here" while later examples, with no difference in the mechanics, state "Force Penny Into Slot." For all but a select group of automatic machines, the first-time customer was challenged to understand what to do when depositing a coin.

Beginning with the Holy Water Vending Machine over 2000 years ago and all coin-ops since, the *raison d'être* for a coin-operated machine is —"take in the money." Whether modern or antique, a simple set of principles outlines exactly how a coin-op machine must make its living:

First, to snag the customer, the machine must call attention to itself. The visual appearance, i.e. signage and case design, must quickly convey what end product it is offering—foremost to attracting money. Second, once a customer is enticed to spend a coin, the machine must explain what to do to com-



plete the transaction, be it “push, pull, or turn.” The third and final step? To reliably deliver the payoff of merchandise to the awaiting patron, be it entertainment, information, or financial rewards. Each design change that improves on these principles increases both the clientele’s satisfaction and the owner/operator’s financial success.

A study of antique mechanical machines from the perspective of the second principle—operating procedures—yields the discovery of a small, elegant class of automatic coin-ops. Designed to make machine “user-friendlier,” they entirely eliminated the need for instructions and the customer’s physical effort. As the ultimate in convenience machines, and way ahead of its time, the patron dropped in a coin and the machine managed all the rest. No fussing required! This elite category can be referred to as **Stored Energy Automatic Machines**. (SEAMs).

SEAMs are defined as “those machines that have a self-operating mechanism containing an internal motive force to drive it.” The power comes from a spring that is wound up, or pre-loaded with energy by the owner/operator, and released automatically by the dropped-in coin. The power is freed in a measured amount and enough energy remains stored in the spring for multiple sales. In all but one case of coin-op SEAMs, this spring power is converted into mechanical action through a device known as a clockwork motor. (The exception, The Mansfield’s Automatic Clerk, utilizes power generated by spring compression.)

The clockwork motor was first used in watch works around 1450AD. The mechanics involve a tempered strip of steel wound into a coil as a spring. Its tension is released into a series of gears. The design ratio of the gears delivers the speed and torque necessary for a particular output. A braking mechanism — fan, flywheel, governor or pendulum — is often used to control the output speed. The whole mechanical action is held in check by a mechanical detent, effectively a start/stop switch. In a coin-op machine, the coin trips the detent to permit one cycle of operation.

Long before the development of electric batteries and electric motors, the clockwork motor was the

only type of built-in portable and compact energy device available. Powered by people energy, it first became popular in late 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe for use in toys, automata, and music boxes. By the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in the United States, the clockwork motor was used for toys, fire alarms, and other commercial products. Even after electricity was commonplace, clockwork motor drives continued to be useful in many applications.

The integration of clockwork motors into coin-op machines was a marvelous combination for many reasons. Coins could easily trip the clockwork mechanism into action. Many sales could be performed with a single winding. The clockwork motor was a high value-added component to the customer. Indeed, a SEAM was especially successful with the ladies, as they did not have to grope around to operate the mechanism, thus preventing embarrassment!

By eliminating the need for instructions, SEAMs became simple “drop coin” machines. Information, frequently located near the coin slot itself, was reduced to “DROP COIN HERE,” or “DROP PENNY HERE.” The Clawson Dice machine, declared “TO TELL YOUR FORTUNE, Drop a Nickel in the Slot.” One machine, The Niagara Gum vender, even advertised itself as a SEAM: “AUTOMATIC,

NO ROD! NO CRANK!” For clockwork motor machines, with a drop of the coin, they came to life with a buzzing sound and delivered the “goods.”

A special sub-category of SEAMs, including the Buffalo Gum, Zeno Gum, Automatic Clerk, and Pope Cigar venders, were made with glass bell jars or glass cases providing the customer a view of the movement of the gears and other working parts. The bonus visual show added novelty entertainment and enhanced the buying experience. Glass cases also projected a sense of propriety by showing off its fresh wares, allowing the customer to see exactly what was for sale, and whether the machine was empty or not. Unique for the time, a glass SEAM transaction closely resembled a live human transaction in a store or saloon.



There were also exposed mechanism models in early trade stimulator SEAMs, like the exciting Clawson Dice and Weston "Tilt Tray" machines. Their hypnotic, automatic "action" inspired a sense of rhythm and fair play to the gambler. Many other trade stimulator models took advantage of the popular clockwork drive too, and are testament to the success of this form, especially "arrow" type "Eclipse" styles. An outstanding SEAM payout machine, The Clawson Bee Hive, was a brilliant mechanical device that could automatically deliver one to forty nickels on a win. The buzz of the clockwork motor on a payout represented the sound of bees, while the case resembled a beehive. Making money with honey?

The most popular use of clockwork motors in arcade machines was in "drop card" picture machines.

The efficiency of the card mechanisms united with long-lasting clockworks permitted many plays on one winding. Caille's Cail-O-Scopes, Mill's Auto-Stereoscopes, and Rosenfields were the most popular SEAMs. Another benefit for the operator was the clockwork controlled time limit for each play. Time is money, and a fixed, short amount of time for viewing a set of cards was to the operator's advantage. Not allowing the customer to control the pictures' advance or sharing the pictures with non-paying guests was a definite improvement over earlier models. Other picture viewers, like the Mills Quartoscope and the Caille Auto-Muto, were not *automatic* stored energy machines but still employed clockwork motors as timing devices for the same purpose.

Clockworks were regularly used as mechanism components in many other non-SEAMS. The Mills Lion Lung Tester employed one to drive the "roaring" contraption. In Exhibit's Grandfather Clock strength tester it was used to ring a mechanical bell. The Caille Simplex Electric Shocker used one to time out the "juice" after a minute. Almost all slot machines used clockworks to time the various mechanical sequences from stopping spinning reels to the payout of jackpots. Phonographs and record players required clockworks to play the music

while controlling the playback speed. And clocks themselves were found in several scales, music boxes and vending machines (see Stollwerck).

In expensive and delicate coin-op disk music boxes, such as Reginas, pre-storing the energy was a means to prevent machine damage by not allowing the customer himself to wind the spring. The heavy-duty clockwork motor built into business-grade SEAMs was a boon to operators. It permitted them to place these machines in commercial locations and made it practical for the operator to fill the machines with the latest tunes.

Early coin-op machines were seen as labor saving devices in a land short on workers. It would be logical to think that SEAMs were not especially suitable for "high traffic" locations such as New York City subways, penny arcades, street corners, and railway stations. Frequent winding of a well-patronized machine might require many visits by an attendant. But labor was much cheaper in earlier years and the profits from the machines easily covered the expense of the workers. Besides, the best-built SEAMs were able to vend a full machine's worth of product on a single winding. The Buffalo Gum machine contained 160 tabs of gum and a typical Pulver had 90 pieces.

A respectable part of the millions of dollars collected each year, in pennies, nickels, and dimes, from coin-op machines was taken in by stored energy automatic machines. The most successful SEAMs ever produced were vending machines. The champions of all were the Automatic Clerk (more than 102,000 sold), the wood and steel Zenos (over 150,000 sold), and especially Pulvers (much more than 500,000 sold of all styles).

Many factors account for their great success:

- 1) high profits made by the owners of the machines
- 2) customers' satisfaction on all levels,
- 3) low wholesale cost to dealers,
- 4) operating precision,
- 5) marketing acumen by the manufacturers producing premium give-a-ways, and, of course,
- 6) the product's automatic delivery. All added up to making the SEAM vending machines exceptional winners.



In the Penny Arcade category, the Cail-O-Scope was very popular and produced in the tens of thousands. At \$40 each it was the least expensive drop card machine in the Caille line (pronounced Cail, Roger!).

Amazingly, the oldest known American coin-op machines following the 1839 Penny Papers Tobacco vending machine, happens to be a group of clockwork SEAMs. A description appears in *Scientific American Magazine*, March 3, 1877 covering interesting developments at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. Entitled "A Machine Salesman," it reads:

"Among the ingenious devices for gathering small change from visitors to the Centennial were several curious mechanical toys, which the inventor placed in the halls of the principal hotels near the grounds. Each consisted of a case having a glass front through which a miniature scene was visible, the trees, houses, figures, etc., being neatly painted and cut out of pasteboard. Over the box was placed a request for the visitor to drop a five-cent piece at a slit in the side and witness the performance which would thereupon take place. When the coin was inserted, on its passing into a receptacle beneath, it struck and released a detent; clockwork was thus allowed to act and the figures were set in motion to represent a trotting race, fox chase, or some similar proceeding. The device had places for advertisements; and what with his returns for displaying them and from the very many five-cent pieces which entered the till, we were informed that the enterprising exhibitor cleared quite a large sum of money."

These were quite successful! While there is no mention of the nationality of the inventor of the above pieces, it is quite possible that he was of English origin. Another automatic machine was also described in the article, a picture card vending machine! It utilized gravity as the source of power and credited Mr. William Alexander Brice, an Englishman, as the inventor.

European machines from England, Germany, and France were some years ahead of America in the development of coin-operated machines, espe-

cially SEAMs. In England, John Dennison was already building "Working Model" and "Set Scene" SEAMs as early as 1875, and around 1880, George Lee began a three-generation dynasty that made SEAMs and various coin-ops, the legacy continuing into the 1950s. Lee's famous SEAM creations include "The Guillotine" and "The Haunted House."

Automatic "gravity powered" machines are the ultimate automatic machines. Technically not SEAMs but ingenious none-the-less, they are a smaller group of automatic coin-ops that utilized gravity as the means to dispense a product or payout. Examples of a few gravity coin trip vending machines are the Jennings Mint Vender, the Gravity Vender Co's Honey Breath Ball and Ball Gum machines, plus the granddaddy of all coin-op machines: The Holy Water Vending Machine! (The weight of the six drachma coins opened a valve to dispense water.) The "3 for 1" gambling machines, such as the Jones and others, also utilized gravity for automatic payouts. Gravity coin-op machines are the simplest mechanisms ever made in coin-op machines.

It's apparent that not all stored energy clockwork motor machines were automatic delivery. My terminology, for this type, called "SEMs," stores enough energy for only one play and it is the buyer who stores it and not the operator. The energy is dissipated with each play and the coin does not trip the automatic action. These types still have need for "push, pull, turn, or crank" instructions. Examples are the Baker Boy gumball vender, Roovers Fortune Tellers, Mills floor model Quartoscopes, Auto-Muto, Regina Hexaphone, Edison and Autophone Phonographs, etc. Strangely, a few SEAMs have "un-SEAM-ly" companions that are "SEMs." A second version of the Happy Jap Gum vender (several known) requires the customer to turn a lever next to his mouth to release the clockwork power. And there is also a SEM version of the Birdies Gum vender called the Singer Birdies (one known). It has a push knob on the front to activate the clockwork motor after depositing a penny. Both machines look basically



the same on the outside as their SEAM brothers.

Of all the thousands of different coin-op machines produced over the years, only a very small percentage, perhaps only 2% or 400 pieces, were SEAMs. Several possibilities might explain the low numbers: Clockworks could not supply enough power and were more expensive than simpler, direct-linkage mechanisms. They were difficult to design — the average inventor did not have the skills to incorporate a clockwork motor in his creation — and, last but not least, most early American inventors were entrepreneurs who saw a market opportunity that did not require sophisticated products.

In Europe, around 1900, it was exactly the opposite. The opportunities for individuals to invent, manufacture, and start a business were very restrictive. It fell to the old time manufacturers, those with lots of history in making toys, musical instruments, and household goods, to take advantage of the coin-op boom in their neck of the woods, albeit a smaller one than in the U.S. Dealers offered hundreds of

different coin-ops, many of them SEAMs. And for a small extra charge, a wide variety of clockwork toys, automata, and music boxes could be ordered with a coin slot attachments. Those that were ordered for penny or nickel operation (and with English instructions) were shipped to the U.S., as in the case of the Cootchie Cootchie and Stollwerck machines.

From its beginnings, the coin-op machine energized the American economy, coin by coin. Selling amusements, products, or the hope of a jackpot, these movable feasts propelled us into a new era of convenience and personal entertainment. The unique category of antique “**Stored Energy Automatic Machines,**” engineered by incredible resourceful and talented inventors over a century years ago, established the “modern” experience of instant, effortless gratification. Yes, blame them! The men who produced them brought us the epitome of mechanical sophistication. Their reputation still stands....

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The picture gallery of antique SEAMs comes from many collections. According to Dick Bueschel, the likely rate of survival of turn-of-the-century machines is around 1%. Because of the delicate nature of SEAMs, however, it is possible that they had a worse rate of fate. I have included rarity information for those collectors who might like to seek out particular pieces. Rarity is given based on current collectors’ best estimates. Several great machines are still available today because of the large number of them produced: Zenos, Pulvers, Automatic Clerks, and Cail-O-Scopes. These are exceptional additions to any collection.

Many thanks to a great bunch of guys for their helpful contributions to this article: Tim LaGanke, Bob Legan, Mike Gorski, Rob Raznick, Mike & Sandy Revel, Bernie Gold, Bob Pellegrini, Mike Rechter, David Copperfield, Ed Mazolla, Alex Warschaw, John Johnston, DuWayne Bakke, Mel Getlan, Les Cohen, Roger Kislingbury, and Bob Linz. A special thank you to Tom Gustwiller for his generous contribution of photos and willingness to share information with us on gambling machines.

Here is my listing of known SEAMs. Not all brand models are included. Foreign-made machines are not included unless they were specifically produced for the U.S. market using American coins. Machines marked with a \* are not pictured in this article. Readers are welcomed to contribute photos, information, and corrections for inclusion in a follow-up article.

There are sure to be more of these special machines out there in the “woodwork.” May you be the next collector to find a great one!



## STORED ENERGY AUTOMATIC DROP-COIN MACHINES BY CATEGORY:

### AMUSEMENT

Arcade: Mills Lady Perfume, Mills Auto Stereoscope, Mills Cathedral, Exhibit Photoscope\*, Cail-O-Scope, Rosenfield Drop Card Countertop: AutoRama, Mills Miniature Lady Perfume, Mills Unit Picture Machine, Mills Counter Quartoscope\*, Rosenfield Drop Card, Locomotive Working Model, Exhibit Roll the Dice\*

Automata: Mechanical Birds sold by Caille, Mechanical Birds by several makers, i.e. Bontems & Vichy\*, Phalibois' Coochee Coochee, Phalibois Whistler\*

### MUSIC

Music Boxes: Regina Changers in assorted sizes, Regina single play 15-1/2" models,

Polyphons\*, Symphonions\*, Kalliope\*. All music box makers made many coin-op SEAM models.

Phonographs: ??

### GAMBLING

Trade Stimulators: Clawson Dice, Weston Slot Co. The Weston, U.S. Novelty (eclipse style), The Anthony (eclipse style), J.E. Nelson (eclipse style), Valley City (eclipse style), Grand Rapids (eclipse style), Amusement Machine Co: Columbian Automatic Card, Lichty Automatic Salesman & Phrenologist, Tell Your Fortune, Triograph Dice/Card Viewer, Mills New Arrow, Exhibit Try Your Luck, Exhibit Roll The Dice, Wizard Clock, Columbian Dice Automatic Poker, Payouts: Clawson Bee Hive, Amusement Machine Co Fortuna

### VENDING

Niagara Gum, Niagara Chocolate & Gum, Mercer Loop-The-Loop Gum, Caille Teddy Bear Gum, Birdies Gum, Mills Miniature Lady Perfume, Happy Jap Gum, Buffalo Gum, Peaches & Cream Gum, Auto Sales Gum, Colgan's Gum, Zeno Gum (glass, wood, wood/metal), Enterprize Peanut, Pulver Gum (wood, metal tall case, rounded top porcelain case), Collar Button, Pope Cigar, Knapsack Match, Acme Lighter Fluid, Stollwerck Chocolate (small wood, large wood), Crown Perfumery, Mansfield's Automatic Clerk, American Automatic Vending Mach. Co Chocolate Vender and Music Box\*, Jacobs Cigar Vender\*

By Pictured Machines:

(Photos 1 thru 7 are featured on the front cover)

- 1. The Birdies.** "Drop 1¢. Hear and See Birdies Sing-Perform And Give You Pure-Sanitary Delicious Gum" The Purdy-Moore Gumball Vender is an uncommon sight and sound vending machine. The clockwork motor drives the animation for the head, tail, beak, bellows for the chirps, and the dispensing mechanism. This is a very well engineered machine and a very late SEAM. Serial #1068, Ca 1928. Two known.
- 2. The Niagara.** "Automatic. No Rod. No Crank" is headlined on the sign, proudly announcing to the patron that he has nothing to do but drop in a coin. This clockwork automaton machine gave "Your Fortune Told And A Piece Of Gum." plus an acknowledgement for only a penny. The boy tips his hat and tilts his cane while the Niagara gum is dispensed through the mouth of the sidekick. Signed in the coin tray "Build [sic] by Otto Schmidt." Niagara Pepsin Gum Co. Marked "#5" inside, 1904. Only one.
- 3. Fortuna.** A combination gravity type and double clockwork machine, one for the revolving jackpots and one for the payout made this beautiful and desirable payout machine an unreliable playing machine for the customer and was not successful for the owner. Amusement Machine Co. 1894. 2 known.
- 4. Mills Lady Perfume Sprayer..** "Drop One Cent In Slot Of Purse" A classic arcade machine that squirts a drop of perfume for a penny was "a prime favorite with the ladies anywhere." It contains the same clockwork mechanism as the miniature version. The beautifully dressed woman is made of papier-mâché. Mills Novelty Co. 1905. 3 known plus repros.
- 5. Mills Cathedral.** The Mills Novelty Co. produced this "exotic" style stereo view cabinet to stand out from the other machines and attract the crowd. Mills' stereo view machines contained 12 pictures per set. 1905. Several dozen known.

- 6. Regina Music Box Counter Gum Vender.** Made for shop locations, the small counter type single play music box 12-3/4" disk machine came in several different case designs. 1902. Several dozen known.
- 7. Clawson Dice.** "To Tell Your Fortune Drop a Coin in the Slot." An exposed mechanism gives a wow factor to the customer and a sense of "honesty." Around 12 originals. (This was also reproduced in the late 1970's using original clock mechanisms. 27 pcs.) Clawson Machine Co.

(Photos 8 thru 22 are on page 11)

- 8. Valley City Slot Mfg. Co. (eclipse style).** Two-arrow spinner. A fancy carved case made for more eye appeal.
- 9. Columbian Automatic Card Machine.** The very fast spinning five-reel action makes this clockwork machine a real eye catcher. Amusement Machine Co 1892. 3 known.
- 10. The Anthony (eclipse Style).** Two-arrow spinner. A metal bezel a little design. 6 known.
- 11. Auto-Rama.** This "peep show" saloon machine presented pictures of popular actresses of the day, some showing a bit of cleavage. Two clockwork motors. One controlled the changing of the 15 glass slides and one set the timing of the battery-powered lamp. American Auto-Rama Machine Co 1897. 1 known.
- 12. Bee Hive.** Clement C. Clawson, a pioneer coin-op inventor, produced a powerful clockwork motor housed in a sculpted case representing a beehive. (see text) Clawson Manufacturing Co 1896. 5 known.
- 13. Singing Birds Automaton.** "Drop Coin Into The Slot." "then the birds sing alternately and so naturally that everybody is enchanted," reads the Ernst catalog that sold this machine in 1898. Produced by Bontems, Paris, France, it was made to suit any prescribed coin. All four birds in the gilded cage move their heads, beaks, and tails in synchronization with the chirping sounds and the top one also moves subtly up and down. Around 10 known of 4 birds, many more of the 3, 2, and single birds models. Also produced was single bird, sold, by Caille, that sang a specific song like "Mr. Dooley." Around 10 known.
- 14. Buffalo Gum.** "Drop Penny Here" on the star right above the coin slot is as easy as a SEAM can make it for the customer to spend a penny. The revolving action of the four columned carousel, along with the loud whine of the clockwork motor, made for a bonus visual and aural show while buying a piece of Buffalo Gum. The lovely bell jar that showcases the mechanism stands on an aluminum base. White Vending Co. Serial #5583, 1907. Ca.12 known of all models.
- 15. Cail-o-Scope.** Comedy, sex, travel, or adventure was offered for a penny a show. Fifteen stereo views per set with four sets inside, told a story revolve past the lens driven by a clockwork motor. An arcade had to have type of machine and one of the most popular of all. Caille Bros 1904. Hundreds known.
- 16. Wizard Clock.** "Drop a coin in the slot and get one, two, or three Five Cent Checks." An unusual trade stimulator hidden in the form of a clock. Contains two clockworks, one for the clock and one for the token dispensing mechanism. Loheide Mfg. Co. 1908. Ca. 20 known.
- 17. Colgan's Gum.** "2 Sticks For Every 5th Penny, 1 Stick For 1 Penny" was a great deal, especially if you were the lucky customer to receive two Colgan's gum on your first coin. The machine had a visible mechanism to view the goods and had a handle attached to the back for the proprietor's convenience. National Vending Machine Co. 1902. Ca.12 known.
- 18. Collar Button.** In the early 1900's, when white shirts were required attire for the office working class, removable collars helped to reduce the wives' daily wash load. A very small clockwork motor could dispense the entire 84 buttons inside on a single winding. Six different styles were offered. The manufacturer remains unknown for this 5¢ machine. Ca. 1898. 3 known.
- 19. Crown Perfumery.** "Directions. Drop One Cent And Hold Your Handkerchief A Little below This Head" The clockwork drops a lead weight onto a rubber bulb that squeezes the perfume out the spot. Perfume was especially popular with the ladies in the years before indoor plumbing! 1897. Ca. 6 known.
- 20. Coochee Coochee Automaton.** "See Little Egypt Perform The Dance Of The Pyramids. Drop Nickel In Slot. 5¢" The music box plays "The Streets of Cairo" as the exotically dressed and bejeweled doll rolls her eyes, flutters her eyelids, turns her head, undulates her breasts, rocks her arms, and wiggles her hips. Made by Jean Phalibois of France for the American market after the Chicago Worlds Fair of 1892-3 that introduced belly dancing. Sold by Albert Pick & Co for \$200. Clockwork wound from the rear, good for 25 plays. Ca. 1895. 2 known.
- 21. Triograph.** "See Nine Beautiful Views and Throw The Dice For Cigars" Nickel in the slot on top gets one or more cigars. (add up spots on dice) Drop a coin in lower slot and see the beautiful pictures. Charles C. Bishop & Co. Ca. 12 known.
- 22. Grand Rapids Slot Machine Co. (eclipse Style).** Two- arrow spinner. The plain case was less costly to make and sell.



(Photos 23 thru 36 are on page 12)

23. **Enterprise Peanuts.** "Put A Penny In The Slot, Package Will Be Delivered Below" Peanuts in small pretty boxes were vended from this machine that displayed one in the window. This is the only SEAM peanut vender. Ca 1893. 2 known.
24. **Happy Jap.** "Drop 1¢ Here" surrounds the coin slot. While not too politically correct today, this Japanese fellow was happy to eject a stick of gum from his mouth, or a tab gum into a tray on another version, for only penny. One floor model style with a porcelain sign also exists. White Vending Machine Co. 1902. Ca. 15 known.
25. **Hoo Doo.** No losers on this machine. A minimum of 5¢ up to 25¢ was the payout. The wheel spins very quickly. The Overton Mfg Co 1902 3 known.
26. **J.E. Nelson (Eclipse Style).** A plain case. 4 known.
27. **Knapsack Matches.** "Drop One Cent In Slot" The Knapsack is an ingeniously efficient clockwork device. A penny activates the motor to push the bottom match tin out into the tray. As each column empties, the carousel rotates under its own spring tension to the next column. Holds 72 tins. Two versions: colored decals & b&w decals. An early SEAM, 1892. Ca. 9 known.
28. **Acme Lighter Fluid.** "Drop Penny Here Fill Your Lighter" A late production of a SEAM, Acme made this machine especially for the very popular Zippo lighter. The clockwork motor automatically delivers a dribble of lighter fluid from its storage tank to the short spout on the front. Ca. 1925. 2 known.
29. **Loop-The-Loop.** "Drop One Cent. See Diavalo Loop The Loop And Get A Piece Of Pepsin Gum" Diavalo takes a spin around the window as a tab of Loop The Loop Chewing Gum is vended. The wheels turn as the bicycle moves. When thrill acts were all the rage, Diavalo made a living wherever he could draw a crowd. He died around 1912 after a fall during his performance. Made by the Mercer Mfg Co. and distributed by Caille. 1904. 6 known.
30. **Mills New Arrow.** The Mills Novelty Co.'s entry into the elipse style sweepstakes was this short-lived machine.
31. **Mills Unit Picture Card.** A compact, lighter in weight, and less expensive offering by the Mills Novelty Co. 1904. A single set of 15 views ran for about 175 times without rewinding. 2 known.
32. **The Niagara Chocolate / Gum Vender.** "Drop Penny in the Slot And The Machine Will Do The Rest" The Niagara Pepsin Gum Co. was obviously aware that an automatic machine was worth advertising. It utilizes the same-patented mechanism as above. This beautifully decaled machine offered a choice of Tobler's Milk Chocolate and Niagara Chewing gum. Serial #1464, 1904. 3 known.
33. **Mansfield's Automatic Clerk.** No instructions were necessary on this ubiquitous automatic gum vender. The machine rings a bell with each purchase, alerting the proprietor of a sale. The earliest style had a solid glass front. Models with celluloid signs followed, and last was tin signs. Automatic Clerk Co. Serial #19487, 1902. Many dozens still survive.
34. **Miniature Lady Perfume.** "Drop Coin Here" A heavy-duty clockwork motor drives a piston inside a small reservoir that squirts a few drops out onto a ladies handkerchief. One winding is good for many hundreds of squirts. The papier-mâché front appeals to the ladies. Mills Novelty Co. Serial #262, 1904. 6 known.
35. **Peaches and Cream.** "One Cent Here" reads between two hands that point to the coin slots. This small and compact glass machine was designed to fit on a shop counter and act like a salesman for the proprietor. Selling Peaches & Cream Gum, the unusual clockwork used dropped in penny as part of the mechanism to help push out a piece of gum. Robertson Sales Co. 1906. Serial #132, Ca. 7 known.
36. **Automatic Sales Co.** "Drop Penny In Slot" The smallest clockwork motor machine dispensed gum from either of two columns according to which slot the customer dropped in his penny. A wood top and bottom with thin glass sides made this a very delicate machine. 1903. Ca.6 known.

(Photos 37 thru 53 are on page 13)

37. **Pope Cigar.** "Drop Coin In Slot, Cigars Delivered Below" The motor drives a paddle that pushes the cigars out the removed box end until a cigar gets caught in the groove of a rotating drum. The drum drops the cigar into the tray. Pope Automatic Co. advertised in Popular Mechanics to offering individuals the opportunity to set up routes of this classy, glassy machine. 1909. Ca.12 known of 5¢ and 10¢ versions. Also comes with white porcelain fronts.
38. **Pulver Chocolate & Gum.** "Sweet Chocolate And Gum One Cent" By 1900, when this machine was produced, the company changed its name to The Pulver Chocolate & Chiclé Mfg. Co. The tall case metal cabinet was made with many different porcelain signs and the characters inside were updated with newer comic strip characters, in this case, Foxy Grandpa. The clockwork remained but the animation was reduced to a body turn. Over 50 of all the different models exist.
39. **Pulver Cop & Hobo.** "One Cent Delivers A Tasty Chew" The round cornered porcelain models arrived in the 1930s and by then, The Pulver Co,

was the all-time king of clockwork vending machine makers. This Cop & Robber edition reflected the public's interest in law and order in the post prohibition era. A Traffic Cop character was also produced along with the indomitable Yellow kid. For more designs see, Silent Salesman Too by Bill Enes. Many hundreds have survived.

40. **Pulver, wood model #2.** "If You're The Feller As What Was Lookin' For A Chew, Put A Penny In The Slot And I'll Give it Ter You. -- "The Kid" In 1898, the Pulver Chemical Co., launched their endearing, long-lived series of animated gum venders with the help of the Yellow Kid, the first successful comic strip character, drawn by Mr. R.F. Outcault. Driven by a clockwork motor below, the automaton turns, bobs his head, and raises his right hand to his mouth to "chew the gum." This 1899 model is slightly smaller than the first. Around 15 known of both.
41. **Regina Music Box Changer.** "Insert 5 cents In Slide" Regina produced this flat front model 36 only in oak for penny arcades. This one has a gum vender attachment. A round front model 36 was also popular. 1902. Many dozens of the various models known.
42. **Rosenfield Drop Card.** Rosenfield was a very early arcade machine maker that produced many strength testers and drop card machines. Their famous "Illustrated Song Machine" combined a Columbian phonograph with stereo views and was a very early sight and sound machine. 1900. Possibly 20 survived.
43. **Stollwerck Sampler.** "To Obtain A Sample Package Of Stollwerck's Sweets, Drop a 5¢ Nickel Into The Slot" Stollwerck was a renowned worldwide German chocolate maker that was pressured to leave the U.S. during World War One. They imported German machines to vend their chocolate here. This machine sold nickel "samplers" of chocolate to entice the customer to buy larger sizes at the counter. Serial #469, Ca. 1905. 4 known.
44. **Teddy Bear.** "Drop One Cent In The Slot, You Get Teddy Bear Gum And The Little Bear Performs" The bear rises and tumbles over the bar as Teddy Bear chewing gum is dropped down the chute. "Teddy Bears" became the rage after President Teddy Roosevelt chose not to shoot a cute little bear cub. Caille was quick to pick up on this popular theme and replaced the Loop The Loop with its own improved clockwork version that held more tab gum. Serial #169, 1906. 3 known.
45. **To Tell Your Fortune.** "Drop A Nickel In The Slot" For those customers in the know, rewards were paid out for the winning numbers, otherwise a penny got a fortune. This is a unique triple arrow trade stimulator. Murray, Spink & Co. 1893. 4 known.
46. **Locomotive Working Model.** Working models and moving scenes were some of the earliest type of coin-ops. Many inventors produced hand made working models to satisfy the public's fascination for viewing a moving miniature locomotive, steamship, or crane. Manufacturer unknown. Ca. 1895.
47. **U.S. Novelty Co. "Eclipse Style" Two-arrow spinner.** A fancy case with a domino theme. Patented by George Stoneburner. 1894 11 known.
48. **Automatic Salesman & Phrenologist.** "You May Have Wheels In Your Head" claims this unique two wheel clockwork machine. The payout rewards are hidden in the fortunes. Norman Lichty Mfg. Co. 1894. 1 known.
49. **The Weston.** A captivating playing machine that rocks the steel balls back and down into the slots in two trays. Adding up the numbered total and consulting the card yielded a payout or not from the proprietor. Weston Slot Machine Co. 1896. 3 known.
50. **Zeno glass model.** "Drop A Nickel Here To Obtain A Package Of Zeno Gum" The exposed mechanism beneath the "king" dome presents a great show with its spinning gears and a swinging arm that alternates the dispensing of packages from the front and rear columns. The only 5¢ clockwork gum machine stands 17" high. The Zeno Mfg. Co. made all the gum for Wm. Wrigley until 1912. Serial #2037, 1902. 2 known.
51. **Zeno (wood model).** "Drop One Cent In The Slot To Obtain A Stick Of Zeno Chewing Gum" The Zeno Mfg. Co. had huge success with its variety of original gum flavors and the machines were given away as premiums with the purchase of the gum. Wrigley bought the company around 1912 and continued the program with the yellow porcelain/steel version. A wood model, encased in painted tin was used for outdoor locations. 1893. Likely, over 100 still exist.
52. **Try Your Luck.** "Put Coin In Slot. Push Slide Way In" This dice thrower and fortune teller was made by Exhibit Supply Co. It could have been used as a "straight" game or as a trade stimulator with payouts given by the proprietor. The design idea was copied from the Clawson's Dice machine 40 years earlier. 1930. 5 known.  
An earlier, similar type of machine, the Roll The Dice, was made in 1925.
53. **Stollwerck Chocolate (large wood).** "Chocolate. Push A 5¢ Nickel...." This floor model chocolate vender adds beauty and a clock to attract the patron's attention, (see principle # 1 for successful coin-op sales in the preceding article.) It utilizes the same vertical corkscrew mechanism as in the smaller model. Ca. 1890. 1 known.

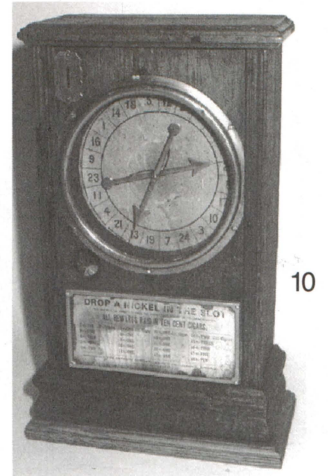




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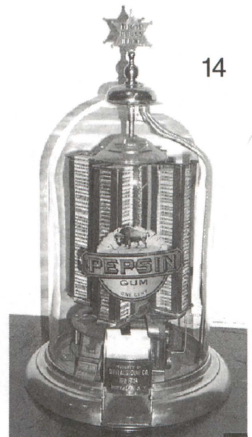
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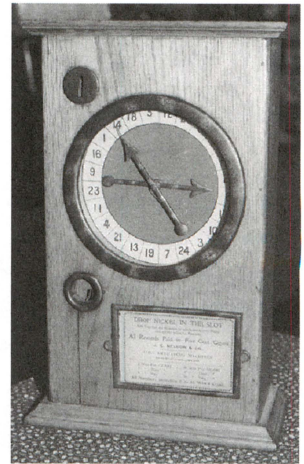
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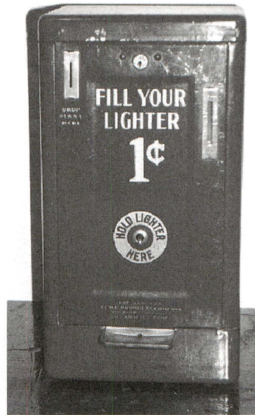
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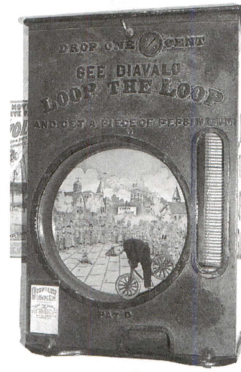
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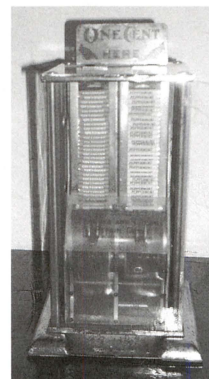
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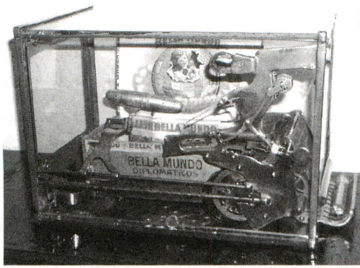


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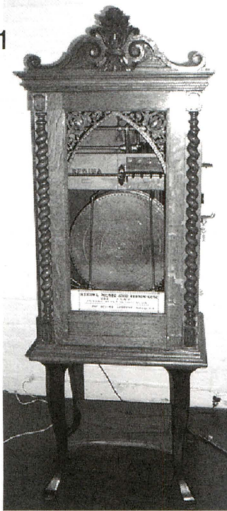
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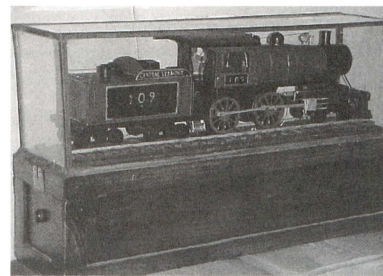
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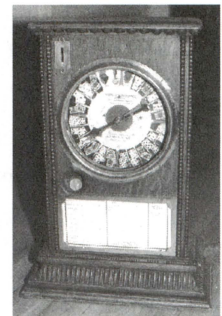
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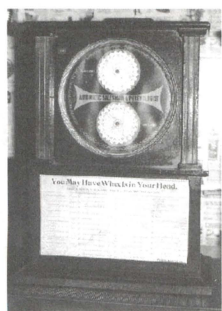
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# VACATIONS NEAR AND FAR

by John Carini

The recession is in full swing and my wife lost her job after 20 years with the same corporation. So, we decided that we would take advantage of her free time and do a little more antiquing than usual. We've taken a number of short trips to towns along the Wisconsin/Illinois border, and trips to some Northern Wisconsin towns. And, with the downturn in the economy, we've found a few good deals.

One Friday, we ventured South to Woodstock, Volvo, Richmond and Antioch, IL. These towns are right next to each other along the Wisconsin border, and less than a two hour drive from our home. In Woodstock, we found a large antique store with a number of coin-op machines. We purchased three -- a cast iron Columbus Model A with an octagon globe in nice, original condition for \$290.00; a 1930's Columbus Match Machine for \$150; and a 1920's Hot Nut machine with an "I Sell 'em Hot" decal for \$225. We passed on the others, a Columbus Model M priced at \$375; a nicely restored single column Pulver stick gum machine priced at \$295; and a Topper for \$165. In Volvo, we passed on an Atlas Bantam for \$165, and a few Northwestern '60's. Richmond and Antioch have a lot of antiques, but not much in coin-op.



Another Friday we traveled West to Fort Atkinson, Whitewater, Milton and Edgerton. I liked Milton the best. This town had quite a few antique shops, including two large shops located in the old Milton College Campus. At a separate large antique mall in Milton we purchased a 1940s Regal on a cast iron stand for \$80. When I got home I took the regal off the stand. The Regal is on my "for sale" shelf, and I am using the stand for my Victor Baby Grandad. The shops in Fort Atkinson were also nice. One had an 1930s E-Z machine with a nice decal/card marquee, but was priced at \$995. that same store also had a really nice Watling scale for \$550. Whitewater had a couple of antique shops, but nothing worth purchasing. I think my wife added that stop to the trip because she graduated from UW Whitewater and wanted to check out the campus. We found several shops in Edgerton, but only one coin-op machine, a wall mounted Advance Unit C for \$275.



Another Friday, we traveled a little further West to Monroe and Mount Horeb. In Monroe, we stopped at the Joseph Huber Brewing Co., we think it's the oldest brewery in Wisconsin (1845). We got there right in between two scheduled tours and didn't want to wait the 1-1/2 hours for the next tour to start, so we checked out the gift shop and bought some beer glasses and left. In Mount Horeb, they also had a number of antique shops, but only common gumball machines, at or more than book price.

The Friday after Thanksgiving we packed up the van, and the whole family headed North to the Appleton/Green Bay area. We stopped in Oshkosh, but found nothing of interest. So we continued on to Appleton. There I purchased a 1950s Jr. Gumball machine bank for \$35. It was in excellent condition. We also found a 10¢ popcorn machine my wife wanted to buy. It was \$80, and rather large and we

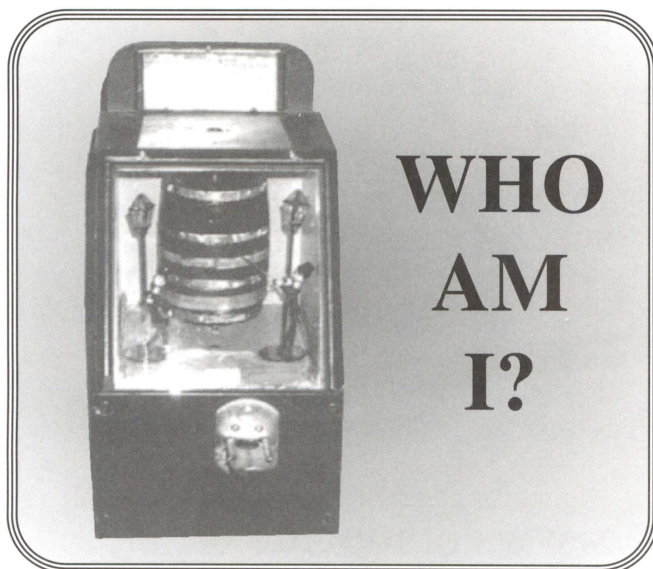


argued about how we would get it home seeing there wasn't much room left in the van. Eventually we left it, knowing we would pick it up on the way back if we decided to purchase it. On Saturday, we headed North to Algoma and Shawno. This is a large tourist destination in summer, and many of the shops listed in our guide books were closed for the season or out of business. In Algoma, we found a couple of shops that were open, and had several slot machines, trade stimulators and gumball machines, all at book price and higher. In one shop, we ran into a fellow collector, who had a booth there. Shawno, also a big summer vacations area, was pretty desolate. We drove by the shops which looked more like craft shops than antique stores, but my wife said we should stop anyway. I didn't even want to try, so I let her go in while I waited in the car. She came out and said go in because there is a Master machine for sale. I went in and found a nice, original 1930s Masters gumball Machine. There were only a few chips in the porcelain and the keys were there. I put a \$250 bid on the machine (priced at \$350), but the owners wouldn't budge.

On Sunday, we stopped at some shops in the Green Bay Area. One in particular looked promising. The shop was very cramped, with antiques everywhere. The aisles were narrow and it was hard to walk through, even single file. But, wow, what a lot of neat stuff! First, they had a nice player piano.

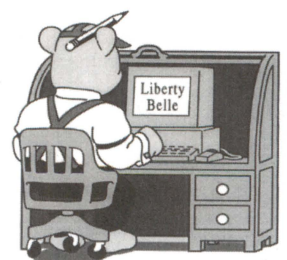
Then I spotted an Imp. It was marked \$195 firm, but after a few minutes of negotiating, I was able to purchase it for \$150. It was in really good condition. As I was speaking with the owner, my son and wife yelled for me to come in to a back room. The doorway couldn't have been more than 18" wide, and I knew I wouldn't fit. Buy my wife keptsaying "YOU HAVE TO". Finally, I squeezed in (knocking a few things down as I did) and found myself in Utopia. First, there was a Rex gumball machine, complete. Then, we found an Appleton without a top cap. We saw many globes, and gumball dispenser units. They weren't priced and when we asked the store owner about them, he said they weren't for sale. Total disappointment! We continued our discussion, and the owner told meabout a back room full of '33 Northwestern Peanut Machines and Victor Model V's, also not for sale. I've since mentioned this shop to a few other C.O.C.A. members, and they told me they too, had tried to purchase these machines, and were told they weren't for sale at this time.

Well, Christmas is coming and we expect to travel to a few more areas over the break. We've also stepped up the number of auctions we go to in the area, but that's another story.



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# STEPHENS MAGIC BEER BARREL

by Tom Gustwiller

Collectors love distinctive machines, and the Stephens Magic Beer Barrel definitely is that. It was first produced one year after prohibition ended, and quickly became a popular tavern item. The three-reel mechanism is contained in a miniature barrel, with beer mug, pretzel and diamond symbols. The best part about the machine is that it vends pretzels in the left column! To play this machine you put a nickel in the top slot and turn the faucet-like handle. Three reels spin and if you get the winning symbols you would have received free beer from the tavern keeper, and of course the pretzels, too.

At first glance, this machine looks cheaply made, but it's aesthetically a knockout. There is nothing else quite like it. When these come up for sale at auction or on E-Bay they are a hot item, even though they are not particularly rare. The Beer Barrel also came

in another model with cigarette reels, with the left column vending candy. If you got the right combination on the reels you received cigarette packs instead of the beer. This version is much rarer.

A.J. Stephens & Co. was located in Kansas City, Missouri. Cashing in on repeal of prohibition, Stephens produced bar fixtures and beer dispensing equipment, as taverns sprung up all over the country, particularly in the Midwest. The company made about a dozen machines from 1932 and 1938, ultimately going back to the beer and food service equipment for bars, restaurants, and home use. The Stephens Magic Beer Barrel was made between 1934 and 1936 and originally sold for \$35.00. Today this type of trade stimulator sells in the \$800. to \$1200. range.

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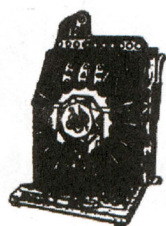
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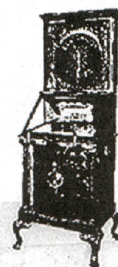
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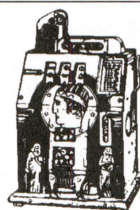
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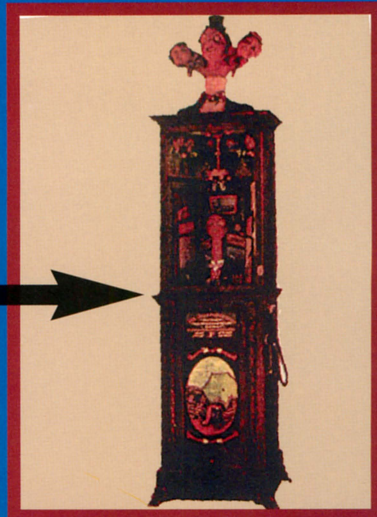
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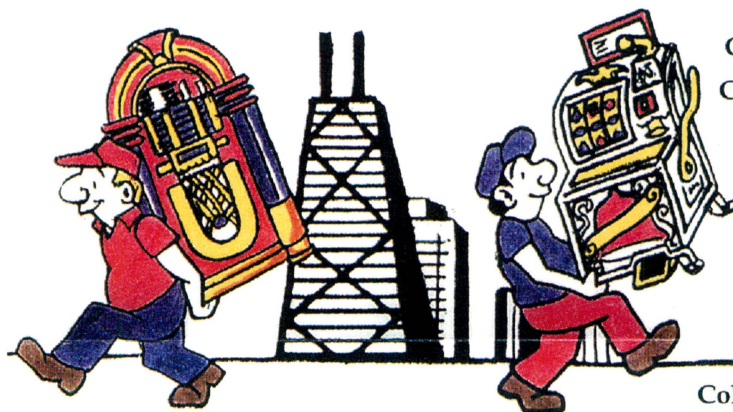
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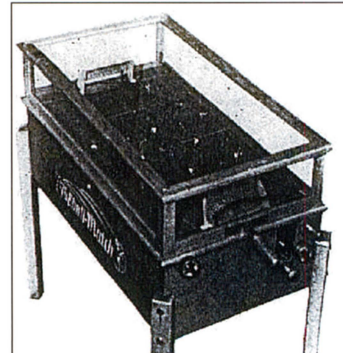
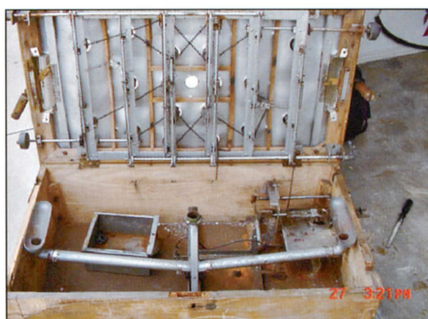
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These machines have all been in storage for many years. All are in good cosmetic shape but would need to be shopped.

## Genco "Jungle"

This machine is about as politically incorrect as you could get. C.1946, it's pre-flipper, great backglass in good condition, and colorful playfield.

## Gottlieb "Stage Door Canteen"

Flippers have been added to this mid 40's machine. Playfield and backglass are colorful and in great shape.

## Genco "Honey"

Another attractive c. 1946's machine. Playfield in good shape, some minor paint loss. Backglass has some minor flaking on the bottom.

## Bally "Rocket"

What a great machine this is. C.1934, this payout machine was never on location. The coin box has all the paint inside and out! Original inspection tag dates it and most of the "NRA" sticker is still there. Cabinet has some pieces that need to be reglued, but it seems to be all there. This machine doesn't need much to be a "Premier" piece in any collection!!

What do you have to trade???

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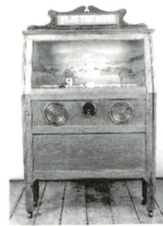
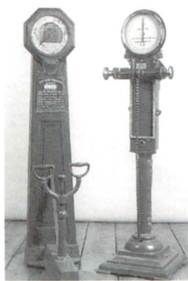
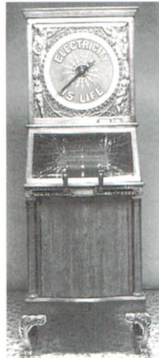
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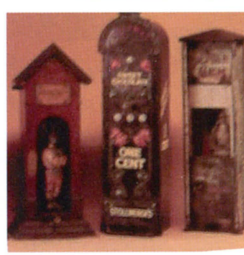
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Even if you don't want to sell anything, give me a call. I've been collecting Coin-ops for about 7 years and do not know many of the long-time collectors.

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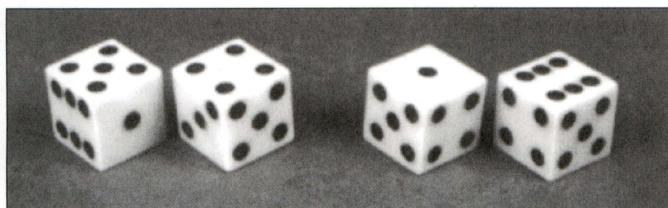
I sometimes SELL when I have duplicates or need space. Some items currently available: Cailoscope • Caille Samson (1 of 4 known) • Monte Carlo • Automaton Climber • Gumballs, etc.

**CALL ME WITH WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR!**



# The Crooked Dice

by Bill Daugharty



I was on duty in the 1943 riot in Detroit, Michigan. I had driven the District commander of the State Police to Detroit Police Headquarters. He was in conference, and I was standing around doing nothing and got bored. I then went to the lock up room to assist in searching people involved in the rioting. In removing their property and putting them in a personnel container he handed me the dice, and I threw them in the bag. He said "Hey man, you can have them". I stated I didn't need any dice. He said "You can't lose with them". I was then interested. He said "If you don't switch them right though you could get your throat cut. I was surprised that they are not loaded.

Well since he gave them to me, I have them. The dice on the left as noted are the crooked ones. The reason is that on a pair of legal dice, the number one is opposite the number six. There is only the number one, five, and six on the one dice. The other dice, only has the numbers five, four, and three. The second pair is the legal dice. Each one has all the numbers on them.



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# Tips for Vending Collectors...

by Don Pom

If you collect and restore vending machines you have had to deal with two elements - glass and salt.

## GLASS

How many times have you had a nice original decal on a globe with a chip on the top or bottom rim? If you were lucky, the chip was on the top rim and could be covered by the top cap. If you were not that lucky, what do you do?

The solution for the problem is a product made by Loctite, called Clear Glass Adhesive. The product is easy to work with and is dispensed from a small syringe and is cured by sunlight. It is easy to work with as it remains workable until it is exposed to direct sunlight.

To repair the chip you will need some scotch tape and some soft plastic, such as the type of plastic used for the top lids of margarine containers. to repair the chip, build a dam at the point of the chip using cut pieces of plastic attached with the tape. Fill the dam with the adhesive and expose to sunlight until all the adhesive cures in the sun. After you remove the dam, you can file the top flat.

## SALT

What do you do to remove salt deposits from vending machine parts? If you are down to individual parts, you can wire brush or bead blast them. However, things get harder if you have two or more pieces held together by the salt.

I have had good luck with removing salt deposits using straight vinegar. Just fill a container with regular household vinegar and add the parts and wait. Most times the parts come out without the salt on them.

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# Meeting Update

by Alex Warschaw, Vice President C.O.C.A.


It seems like the November show just ended and here we are getting ready for April. C.O.C.A. has lucked out; Jasper Sanfillipo has been gracious enough to host this meeting. It will be held between 7:30 and 10:00 at Jaspers house on Friday the 12th of April. If you have never experienced "Jasper's" then I assure you it is well worth the price of membership in C.O.C.A. just to visit once. For those of you who have been there, I think you will find some new additions to the collections. As a special treat we are fortunate to have Robert Ridgeway as the guest speaker. He is an expert in the field of coin-op machines and is world renown for his restorations of penny arcade pieces. He has been responsible for restoring many of the machines found at Jasper's home. The actual meeting will be very brief and it


will start at 8pm sharp. The club will provide soft drinks and munchies for the meeting - valet parking will be in effect. As before, members and one accompanied guest are free. Guests arriving without the member will be asked to join the club or wait for their party to arrive. Directions to Jasper's house and applications to join can be found at the C.O.C.A. Booth. It is a great place to ask questions about the club and all the benefits of being a member.

As the coordinator for the meetings I am always looking for input on speakers, agendas, workshops, or any comments that would make the meeting more enjoyable/educational/fun for all the club members. Please feel free to call me at 480-227-4742 or e-mail me at walex6@msn.com


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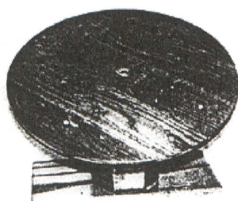


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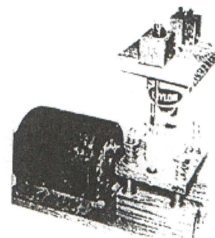


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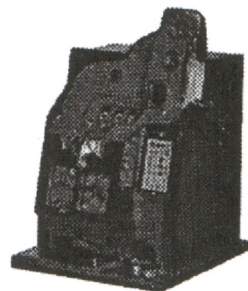
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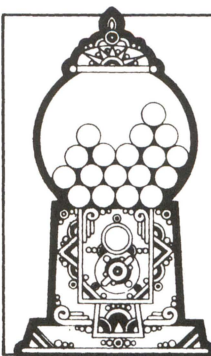
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# Unusual Slezak Height Scale

by Jim and Merlyn Collings

I first saw this Slezak Height Scale at the Chicagoland Show several years ago. (photo 1). I foolishly did not purchase the scale at that time from Mike Gorski. After returning to North Miami, Florida, I phoned Mike to see if he still had the scale. Not only did he still have the scale but he graciously offered to deliver it to me by way of his son. Mike's son was on his way to Marco Island, Florida, where we could rendezvous and pick up the scale. We drove across Alligator Alley, located in the Everglades, in the middle of the night. Collectors will go to any lengths.!

Mike found this height scale years ago in a Brooklyn, New York dental office. The orthodontist used the scale in the waiting room for his patients to enjoy. Upon retiring, the dentist sold the scale to Mike, which was filled to the top with pennies!

There are possibly four or five of the Slezak Height Scales, (circa 1925) known. The scale is a space saver being very streamlined. The wood and porcelain column is only 3" in depth, measuring 77" in height. (photo 2). The scale is light and has four small wheels for easy maneuverability. The tiled foot plate is only 2" off the ground, due to the fact that it has no weight mechanism underneath. (photo 3). The two parallel bars that operate the height mechanism don't take up much room. As the patron stands on the footplate his feet press down on two steel plates which activate the height bars underneath. His feet are held in position by three small guiderails. After depositing 1¢ and following the directions on the column which reads, "center of eyes must be level with top of ears", (photo 4).

A small window on the left of the etched line will open and this indicates the patrons height. All 25 windows, on the mirrored surface, will open at once



Photo #1

and the patron will see his calibrated height match at his eye level. (photo 5). The windows measure heights from 4 feet, four inches to six feet, four inches. The lower portion of the 8" wide column is very eye-catching on the porcelain surface. (see photo #3 again). Imagine, having your height revealed even though you are wearing a hat!

The Vincent F. Slezak Co. of 143 W. Austin Ave., Chicago also made a combination height and weight scale in 1927. To the best of our knowledge only two of these have surfaced. (photo 6). This scale is noticeably different compared to the height scale. The height and weight scale is 81" tall and 14" wide and has a larger footplate. It has a beveled mirrored surface at the bottom, instead of a lettered porcelain column. It has a large papered face dial in the middle of the scale, which indicates the weight. Above the dial the column has a brass frame instead of a porcelain one. A single coin gives both height and weight.

In 1926 Slezak patented the Coin-Controlled Weight Printing Machine. This scale was designed to vend a printed ticket that showed the patrons weight. A separate coin slot was used to measure the patrons height. After inserting the coin a window shield opened which corresponded to the patrons eye level on the mirrored etched line.

Slezak also made small horoscope scrolls that were vended in the Solar Horoscope machines and smaller scales.

There were several older companies that invented and patented other height scales. In 1887, Harvlin Paddock of St. Johnsbury, VA patented the Coin-Operated Measure and Weighing Machine. This unusual scale used a nickel to unlock the height bar and showed the patrons weight in a small window.



In 1888, William P. Inghram from Middlesbury, England, patented the Coin-Released Height Measuring Apparatus. This unique scale lowered the height bar onto the patrons head after the coin was deposited. The height was shown on a separate dial. A similar height scale was made by the International Mutoscope Reel Co., In., called the Test-O-Graph Height Meter. This large wooden and metal scale had two side handles that lowered the mechanism that measured the patrons height. The height was then indicated on the scale dial as added feature, two red lights lit up when the patron stood on the footplate. (photo 7). In 1888, Clement C. Clawson of Newark, NJ patented the machine for determining height and weight of persons. This early scale dispensed a printed ticket which indicated height and weight. Also, in 1888, Edward T. Colby of Chicago, IL patented the Coin-Controlled Machine for Weighting, Lifting, Lung-Tester, and Height Measuring. This unusual 4 in 1 machine provided four services which used two separate dials. In 1908, William H. Johnson of Brandon, Vt patent-

ed the Height Measuring Apparatus. This was a technical machine that had a rotating platform or footplate!

It is uncommon to come across any height and weight scales, although some of the early cast iron scales had a manual or coin-operated height bar. Recently, a small number of height and weight scales made by the Wilco, Co., called the Vend-R-Scale, showed up in a Chicago basement. As the patron stands on the footplate and drops a nickel in the adjoining gumball machine, a colored liquid rises in the "thermometer" type tube indicating his weight. The height is determined by looking in the scale's mirror, (photo 8), as pictured on page 109 in Bill and Jan Bernings book, Scales a collectors guide.

We're very grateful to Bill and Jan Berning, Mike Gorski and Ken Rubin who have given us invaluable input concerning height scales. We are especially grateful to the scale inventors and craftsmen that have contributed to our wonderful coin-op hobby.



Photo #2



Photo #3



Photo #4

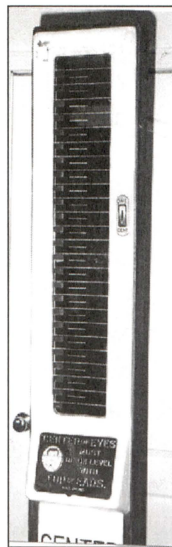


Photo #5

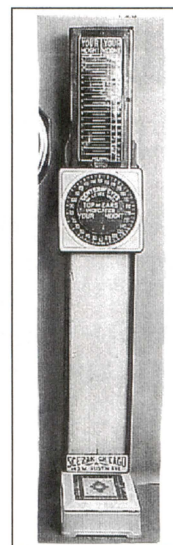


Photo #6

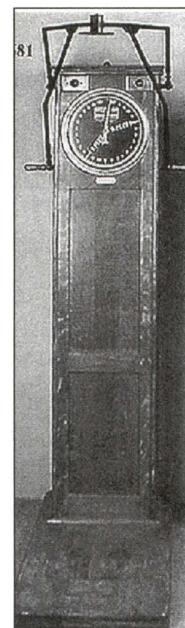


Photo #7

HAPPY SCALE COLLECTING!



# TALES OF THE HUNT

Hosted by **Jack Freund**

*This issue of C.O.C.A.TIMES poses a dilemma...I have two tales to tell. Should I tell one and save the other to insure an article for the next issue? If both stories are told in this issue and I receive nothing more from those of you who still have great tales to tell, I'm afraid TALES OF THE HUNT will wither on the vine and die.*

*This department of C.O.C.A. TIMES is fed by the membership. If you don't take it upon yourself to help support it with stories of YOUR finds it can't survive.*

*So what should I do, one article or both? I have decided to do both and put my faith in you to send me your stories. It's not that hard. Don't worry about spelling or punctuation. We edit all articles for accuracy. Sit down and write the story now. The future of TALES OF THE HUNT depends on you.*

## **TALE NUMBER 1 -**

***Submitted by JoAnn Krueger from Michigan***

*Editor's note: JoAnn is one of the very early vending collectors having acquired her first machine in 1971 and had 20 machines in her collection by 1973. This is the tale of her HAPY JAP gum vendor. It goes like this....*

Everyone in the Kansas City area knew of a man named Jerry Smith. He was the owner of a Lincoln/Mercury car dealership and also a collector of antique toys and other interesting items. He accumulated such a vast amount of items he eventually sold a portion of them to Hallmark (the card company).

Hallmark displayed a large part of the collection for the public to view at their Halls Crown Center Kansas City Store. Most of the items were clean examples of America's past. It was a great drawing card and a virtual museum of knowledge for collectors to learn from.

It was 1976, I believe, when I first had the opportunity to see the collection. I was 20 years old. Every time I traveled even close to KC it was a priority to stop, gaze and drool at all the great collectibles.



I could not take my eyes from one item in the collection, the HAPPY JAP gum vendor. I HAD TO HAVE IT! I inquired with the management and was told the collection was to be appraised and sold at the store. California appraisers were brought in, items were valued and then raised 25%. The store called and I was told the HAPPY JAP machine was priced at \$1500.00. I asked the sales person to please hold it until I could get to Kansas City to pick it up. It was a weekday, my van was in the repair shop, but I was now on a mission to bring my "Jap" home!

A friend drove me to a truck stop. I was able to hitch a ride to KC with a 16-wheeler semi-truck. With cash in my pocket I ran into the store and bought my "Jap".

I went to the bus station but found out the next bus was hours away. With the 30 pound HAPPY JAP under my arm I walked to the Interstate I-35 entrance and thumbed a ride. The drive to complete the quest was enormous...it took me three rides...and each driver thought it strange that I was carrying a large, yellow, cast iron, human-like head. I do not recall feeling embarrassed at all hitching a ride and holding the "Jap" in my lap all the way home. The "Jap" and I arrived home and probably beat the bus by over an hour.

I look back on that crazy venture without regrets. The drive...the passion...the intensity...all part of the challenges of being a coin-op enthusiast!!



## TALES OF THE HUNT - *continued*

---

*Don't forget, this is the last tale until YOU send me one!*

### **TALE NUMBER 2 -**

*Submitted by Herb Weingield from Illinois*

The late Dick Bueschel and I wrote two articles together for "Coin-Op Classics" magazine. Our homes were only about 30 minutes apart. While doing these articles and on many other occasions Dick and I spent much time visiting and talking coin-op.

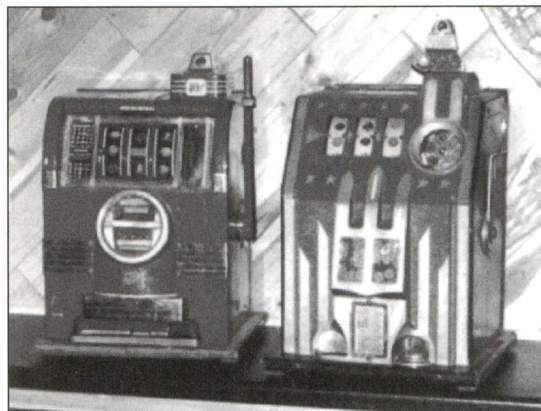
One day he said to me "Herb, I got a letter from a guy in St. Germain, Wisconsin and he has two machines he wants to sell. He sent these pictures, are you interested?"

Pictured were a Pace All Star Comet in one-cent play and a Caille Commander in 10-cent play. Of course I was interested!

After negotiating a price over the phone my wife and I made the seven hour drive to Northern Wisconsin. We spent the night in St. Germain and the next day picked up the two machines. Both were original, with original parts and original keys. Both were working, used, but in "good shape" machines. The pump on the Caille needed some minor work but that was all.

### **I FLOATED HOME!**

Both machines are in my collection today, just as I found them. The pictures are the ones that I took when I got to St. Germain, just as I first saw them. Sometimes it's not only what you know, but who you know.



---

*Please submit articles and photos to:*

Jack Freund

P.O. Box 4

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E-mail: jbgum@msn.com

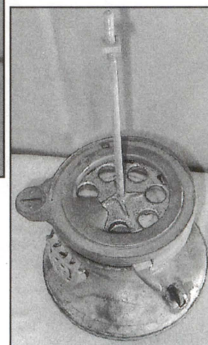
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## **COLUMBUS MODEL K CLARIFICATION**

The machine pictured as a Model K in "silent Salesmen Too" by the late Bill Enes (page 44, upper left) is really a Columbus Model A-3.

The Model K has a flat coin entry and a multiple hole vend wheel. Also, the center rod screws down into the base section (similar to the EZ). It does not have a wing nut at the bottom of the rod. The base section is threaded and the center rod screws into it to draw the base and the mechanism together. Refer to the above photos to view a Model K.

The porcelain Model K pictured on page 44 is correct.





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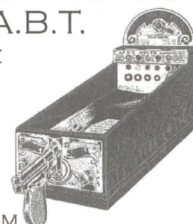
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# The A.B.T. Manufacturing Corporation

by Roger Hilden

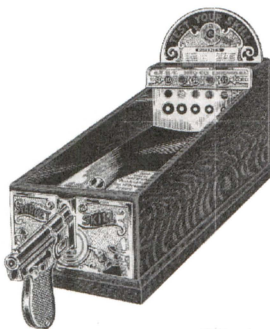
If I were to tell you that I recently picked up a coin operated machine made by the A.B.T. Manufacturing Corp., you would probably assume that it was some type of gun game. And the chances that you would be right would be quite high. But not a sure bet by any means. Even though the countertop pistol shooting game was the bread and butter of their line, they also were active in a number of other areas of the coin machine business.



Arcade machines, pinball machines, scales, and even vending machines and coin acceptor units were part of the A.B.T. stable. To make it even more confusing, even their logo was built around a picture of the pistol end of a gun game. So no story about A.B.T. Manufacturing could be properly told without some homage paid to their line of gun games, and so we shall.

The Model A (makes sense doesn't it?) was the first game to come off the line way back in 1925. A simple game where the patron had five chances to shoot a ball bearing at a panel of five targets. Hitting them all gave the marksman the extreme satisfaction of beating the machine, but nothing more. But Walt Tratsch was a prolific inventor, with dozens of patents to his name, and was never one to sit back and wait for the tide to roll in. So, he came up with a new model that had only three targets (I am guessing that it was called the Model B). If you hit all three targets with your five shots it paid off with a penny-sized token as a prize. Whether the proprietor decided to take it back for an object of greater value was his business.

This model is seldom found, but a picture of one can be seen in Ken Rubin's book Drop Coin Here.



Next came the Model C (how clever), or better known as the Big Game Hunter. This model allowed the sharpshooter to aim at three targets, and when hit they spun around much like the reels of the trade stimulators of the time. Getting the proper combination would gain you a prize. No longer so secretive, there was even an award card issued to place next to the machine to entice pennies from the pocket to the cash box.

Higher end venues had the option of purchasing a gun game in the shape of a miniature pool table called the Billiard Skill or Billiard Practice machine. Measuring 25 by 15 inches, and standing only 10 inches tall, this was a craftsman's delight. Manufactured by hand in walnut, with highly detailed trim, this was the game for the fanciest of locations.



But the gentlemen that made up the brain trust of A.B.T., Gus Adler, Jack Bechtol and Walter Tratsch (the three letters of their last names became the basis for the corporation name) could see that there was great money to be made in other types of coin machines. They were already doing very well selling a line of coin chutes, to just about every other company manufacturing vending and amusement machines, and could see that these other companies were taking the simplest of ideas and turning them into gold.

The ability to design a coin machine around an existing coin chute that was both affordable and extensively adapted to thwart cheaters was a godsend to the operators of that era. Ones that had been in business for awhile knew how much money they were losing to scofflaws and the newcomers to coin-op manufacturing didn't have to reinvent the wheel.



Over the next few years they would add new models to the venerable "Standard Coin Chute", most notably the "Bulldog" and the "Ace." As customer requests came in, from all over the world by the way, they met those demands and added new products to their own line of coin acceptors at the same time.

One of the areas that they could see was ripe for picking in the early 30s was the pinball craze. Companies like Rockola and Genco were already using the Bulldog chute so there was some interaction into that area of the industry. But only eating a bite of ripe fruit is never satisfying to the entrepreneur, so Walt and the boys stepped up to the plate with a new pingame that was originally placed in leftover cabinets from the Billiard Skill machine. Named Dutch Pool, and introduced into a sea of new pingames, it still became a quick hit. Why? Because A.B.T. had an established distribution network and their name was well respected in the industry.

Introduced during the summer of 1931, it showed that Mr. Tratsch was not afraid to jump into unfamiliar territory and dance with the bigger boys such as Bally and Gottlieb. Other models followed closely after such as A-B-T Marble, Horseshoe, Autowhirl, Autocount, Autobank and All Stars. There were probably even more models that were made; just no examples have survived. They even waded into the payout pinball market in 1936 with a game called Captain Kidd.

After that it was Katie bar the door. They could see the potential and the necessity of always having something new and different for the operators to ooh and aah over at the trade shows. And, something that would continually entice John Q. Public to part with a coin or two on the way home from work each day.

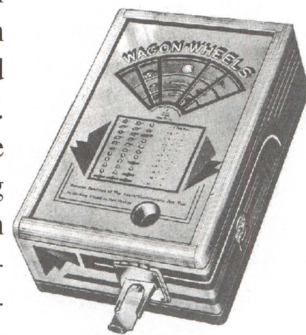
As the saying goes, "Does Macy's copy Gimball's?" Of course they do, and coin machine manufacturers were better (or worse) at it than anyone. Sometimes machines didn't even get on the street from one manufacturer before another had an exact copy of their own for sale. Were there people in the foundries and machine shops that were paid to keep their "other employer" abreast of what parts were moving through the shop for certain customers? Or were the in-house resources so fine-tuned that it

only seemed that competitors could look into the engineering labs and boardrooms of the competition? We will never know for sure.

Sometimes it was a friendly working relationship that benefited both parties. Charles Fey and Tom Watling were great friends with Walt Tratsch and would sometimes share ideas as well as tooing.

The 36 Lucky Spot and 36 Roulette were A.B.T. machines that used actual mechanisms supplied by Fey's company. Other attempts included licensing the rights to games including the Fey 3 Cadets and later that same year, Skill Draw. They also took machines that were on the way out and revamped them into their own for a second chance in life, such as the Groetchen Royal Reels trade stimulator.

Other countertop games that were manufactured by A.B.T. were Play Ball, Casino (a coin drop), The Six Horsemen (an arcade game also built into the Billiard Practice cabinet), Rol-Let (a roulette game copied from Bally), Half-Mile (a countertop racing game), Scram (a pre-flipper pinball), Trip-L-Jax (a coin drop), Wagon Wheels and Prosit (both trade stimulators in countertop cabinets). Most of these have survived in small numbers and the person who would attempt to build a collection around A.B.T. manufactured games (like me) is in for a daunting task. Many are pictured in the two books that concentrate heavily on trade stimulators; Tom Gustwiller's *For Amusement Only* and the late Dick Bueschel's *Guide to Vintage Trade Stimulators & Counter Games*. Both should be on every C.O.C.A. member's bookshelf.



Well there you have a very brief history of A.B.T. The complete story could be a book, which I would like to think I will be able to write some day. In the meantime, if you want to find out more about A.B.T., stop by my Web site; [www.CrowRiver.com](http://www.CrowRiver.com) or send me an e-mail at; [Roger@CrowRiver.com](mailto:Roger@CrowRiver.com). I am always interested in talking coin-op, especially when it revolves around the world of A.B.T.





John Johnson's Booth

# *Scenes from November 2001 Chicagoland Show*

2 Mystery Machines  
at Larry Debaugh's Booth



Paul Hindin's Booth



Alan Sax's Booth



John & Kenna Joseffy



# - LAS VEGAS -

## Arrington Announces New Auction Management

Roy Arrington, CEO of Victorian Casino Antiques in Las Vegas has announced his Auction Company will be under new management effective January 1, 2002. Victorian Casino Antiques has been providing collector auctions for over 25 years. Arrington has now turned the operation over to Peter Sidlow and Pat McGuire, both of Las Vegas, NV. The auction company will continue to provide collectors the premier world wide venue to buy and sell high quality antique advertising, gambling, vending, music, country store, petroliana and Americana antiques.

Sidlow and McGuire, both seasoned dealer/collectors, have already planned the next auction for April 5, 6, and 7 of 2002. That auction, held at the Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas, will offer a several hundred piece collection of petroliana. Most pieces are in mint condition. It also features many rare coin operated machines including the Caille "Black Cat" with music. This c.1902 "Black Cat" is perhaps the most elaborate upright slot machine Caille ever built. There are fewer than 25 know worldwide. The auction also includes a rare c1920 Lukat "The Lucky Cat" gum vendor. The machine, made in San Francisco by the Lu-Kat Novelty company is one of fewer than a dozen still known to exist.

Sidlow said, "We're excited about this opportunity and this next auction will have hundreds of

great pieces, something great for every kind of collector. We have a 1903 center seam Steiff Bear in just wonderful condition, great coin-op, including a rare "St. Nicholas Pepsin Gum" and a "Stollwerck's" chocolate vendor, a "Lion" vendor, a Regina and other music machines: just great things! And great Coca-Cola and other advertising as well. We were just given one of the all time great pieces of advertising to sell: the rare and beautiful Chancellor Cigar display. And it's in superb condition too! Pat and I both are working around the clock to make sure this will be a major auction even." McGuire added, "We've both been attendees at Roy's auctions since day one. It seems like a very natural step for us and we look forward to being able to serve this special collector market in some new and exciting ways. We're looking forward to the coming months of auction planning."

Arrington commented he's looking forward to "retirement." He said, "I've been in this business for nearly 30 years and I've met some wonderful people and had a great deal of fun. I've known both Peter and Pat most of that time. I can't think of two people better qualified to step in." He went on to say, "I'm still planning to be an involved collector. My plans are to relax, travel and continue to collect. All the things I've always enjoyed. And I'm sure those activities will still find me at the auction!"



Lukat "The Lucky Cat" gumball vending/gambling machine. Cast aluminum cat figure, with paint, on a wooden coin box. very rare, less than 12 known. c.1920. From the Lu-Kat Novelty Co., SF, CA.

Stieff "center seam" Teddy Bear, c.1903. Excellent condition.



Chancellor Cigar store display. Die cut and embossed metal, with wonderful color lithography. Excellent condition, c.1910.

Selection of other rare gum and candy vendors, including a Stollwerck's Chocolate (r) and an Albert Pix type Lion vendor, (2nd from r).





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Columbus #9 with Star.....	\$45
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Grandbois Cylinder .....	\$25
Hamilton .....	\$75
Lucky Boy/Bloyd .....	\$30
NW 33 Frosted.....	\$40
NW 33 Junior Tall.....	\$65
Regal Cylinder.....	\$30
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Silver King .....	\$35
Simpson Large .....	\$45
Victor Cylinder.....	\$30
Victor Square .....	\$30

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Asco Hot Nut.....	\$95
Advance Round .....	\$50
Advance Large Football .....	\$70
Atlas Bantam 8 sided .....	\$60
Atlas Bantam smooth.....	\$20
Blue Bird Large .....	\$150
Columbus #3 Hex .....	\$125
Columbus #8 with Star.....	\$125
Columbus #9 No Star .....	\$150
Millard Cylinder .....	\$50
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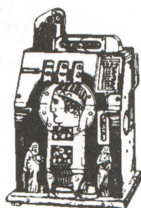
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We can't promise that all photos will be used because of the need for variety but wouldn't it be great to see your machine pictured in the official C.O.C.A. Calendar? GIVE IT A SHOT! Send photo to: Jack Freund, P.O. Box 4, Springfield, WI. E-mail: [jbgum@msn.com](mailto:jbgum@msn.com).



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